



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

MAR 21 2002

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Markey:

Thank you for your letter regarding potential stockpiling and use of potassium iodide. I am pleased to provide the following information.

On December 14, 2001, the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) purchased the available supplier inventory of 600,000 doses of 65 mg potassium iodide (KI) tablets. The adult dose is two 65 mg tablets daily; children would take one tablet daily. This product would be distributed to individuals based on potential time of exposure. It is being stored at a secure, centrally-located warehouse in the National Capital region.

The National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), which includes Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT) and National Medical Response Teams (NMRT), the Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF), and the affected local Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) would participate in distributing the drug. A plan for distribution in the Capital area is being developed with local authorities in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

The Office of Emergency Preparedness also maintains five pharmaceutical caches throughout the continental United States. Four of the caches support our NMRTs and one cache is normally pre-deployed to special events. Each cache contains 5,600 doses (130 mg) packaged in containers of 14 tablets. The total of all five caches is 28,000 doses. These caches are designed for a follow-on response and would be used to augment local responder resources. An additional 50,000 doses are included in the cache used for special events.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (NPS) contains 1,000,000 doses (130 mg) packaged in blister packs of 14 tablets located at several of their strategic storage sites from which the potassium iodide could be distributed to an area of need within 12 hours as a follow-on resource. CDC is working within this Department, with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), and with State and local governments to plan for local rapid distribution of KI when needed.

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The NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are the two Federal agencies responsible for oversight of the emergency preparedness at and around nuclear power plants. NRC will supply one to two doses per individual for those within the 10-mile emergency planning zone (EPZ) of a commercial nuclear power plant. We in HHS are willing to participate with NRC and FEMA in implementing a more coordinated and integrated program.

As you can see from our actions, we are committed to protecting our citizens and will work with other government agencies, States and, local communities in safeguarding homeland security. I have asked Rear Admiral Robert Knouss, Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness to make himself available to brief you if you have more specific questions. Your staff may contact his office at (301) 443-9468. Please call me if you have any further thoughts or questions.

Sincerely,



Tommy G. Thompson